

Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats

Conservation Practice Job Sheet

MA-643



Early successional restoration. T. Bobowick.

Definition

Restoring and conserving rare or declining native vegetated communities and associated wildlife species.

Purpose

To restore land or aquatic habitats degraded by human activity, provide habitat for rare and declining wildlife species by restoring and conserving native plant communities, increase native plant community diversity, and manage unique or declining native habitats. (Note: NRCS uses the term “wildlife” to include all animals, terrestrial and aquatic.)

Where used

This practice may be used on any landscape which once supported or currently supports the habitat to be restored or managed.

Considerations

Habitat management activities should be prioritized, initiated, and orchestrated in concert with an existing state or regional conservation plan for the habitat, species and associated relationships. Confer with other agencies and organizations to develop guidelines and specifications for conserving declining habitats. Follow up habitat assessments shall be performed on a regular basis. All plant materials

should comply with the minimum standards, established by the American Nursery and Landscape Association, 1250 I Street Northwest, Suite 500, Washington, DC. Plant materials centers and commercial growers should be encouraged to develop plant materials for habitat restorations. Haying and grazing will be planned and managed as necessary to achieve and maintain the intended purpose. All habitat manipulations will be planned and managed according to soil capabilities and recommendations for management will avoid excessive soil loss. Residual chemical carryover should be evaluated prior to planting. Species considered locally invasive or noxious should not be used. Refer to “*Wetland, Woodland, Wildland – A Guide to the Natural Communities of Vermont*” for specific plant community descriptions.

Operation and maintenance

Replace dead and dying woody species in newly established plantings. New plantings must be protected from grazing during the establishment (prescribed grazing, use exclusion) period, as well as fire and pests, including insects, diseases, competing vegetation and animals (deer, beaver and mice). Supplemental water as well as periodic applications of nutrients maybe needed to maintain plant health and vigor. Any use of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals shall not compromise the intended purpose of this practice.

Specifications

Site-specific requirements are listed on the specifications sheet. Additional provisions are entered on the job sketch sheet. Specifications are prepared in accordance with the MA NRCS Field Office Technical Guide. See practice standard for Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats, code 643, Tree/Shrub Establishment, code 612, Forest Site Preparation, code 490, Conservation Cover (340), and Critical Area Planting (342).

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If needed, an aerial view or a side view of the practice can be shown below. Other relevant information, complementary practices and measures, and additional specifications may be included.

Scale 1"= _____ ft. (NA indicates sketch not to scale: grid size=1/2" by 1/2")



Additional Specifications and Notes:

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<i>For:</i>	<i>Farm #:</i>
<i>Field(s):</i>	<i>Tract #:</i>
<i>Designed By:</i>	<i>Approved By:</i>
<i>Drawing No(s):</i>	<i>Signature:</i>
<i>Date:</i>	<i>Date:</i>

Purpose (check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Restore land or aquatic habitats degraded by human activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase native plant community diversity
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide habitat for rare and declining wildlife species by restoring and conserving native plant communities	<input type="checkbox"/> Management of unique or declining native habitats

Method (check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Planting seedlings	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Regeneration	<input type="checkbox"/> Seeding
<input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed Burning	<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical weed control	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemical weed control
<input type="checkbox"/> Rotating treatments	Other (describe in notes)	

Existing Plant Community=	Restored Plant Community (ESD)=
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Location and Layout Specifications: (Include a sketch, or aerial photo on page 4.)	
Width (feet; include widths of maintenance areas next to outer rows):	
Length (feet):	Area (acres):
Total area of site managed, enhanced or restored (acres):	
Additional requirements:	

Plant Materials Information – For planting/Seeding, refer MA Standard 612 for species to plant. For natural regeneration, complete, Field, Ac., Species/Cultivars, Plants/acre, Total, Avg. Spacing.							
Field	Ac	Species/cultivars:	Plants/acre or seeding rate ³ :	Total No.	Kind of stock ¹ :	Planting dates:	Avg. Spacing ² :
							Ft X Ft
							Ft X Ft
							Ft X Ft
							Ft X Ft
							Ft X Ft
							Ft X Ft
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¹Bareroot, Container, Cutting; Seed; include size, caliper, height, and age as applicable. ²Spacing between plants to achieve plants/acre. ³Pounds/Acre of Pure Live Seed (PLS) where available.

$$\text{Plants/acre} = 43,560 \text{ (ft}^2\text{/ac)} \div [\text{Between-Row Spacing (ft)} \times \text{In-Row Spacing (ft)}]$$

Note: Sources of Plant Materials can be found in the MA Field Office Technical Guide Section I-A. Refer to Reference Lists – Ecological Science – References 1 and 2. Contact your local USDA-NRCS office for more information regarding these references.

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Temporary Storage Instructions (Refer to VT Standard 612 or commercial plant supplier instructions) <i>Follow temporary storage instructions provided by the plant supplier. In general, planting stock that is dormant may be stored temporarily in a cooler or cool, moist, darkened area up to 3 days. For more than 3 days or for stock that is expected to begin growth before planting, dig a V-shaped trench (heeling-in-bed) sufficiently deep and bury seedlings so that all roots are covered by soil. Pack the soil firmly and water thoroughly. Additional requirements:</i>		
Site Preparation See MA Standard and Specification 490 – Forest Site Preparation, 340 Conservation Cover, or 342 Critical Area Planting <i>Remove debris and control competing vegetation. The following method of site preparation is planned: ____ Mechanical means such as plowing, disking or rototilling, ____ Chemical control of vegetation, ____ Prescribed burning, ____ Hand scalping the area where vegetation is to be planted, ____ Other: _____. Apply recommended amendments as needed, including the following: ____ Tons/Ac. Lime, ____ lbs/Ac. N-P² O⁵-K² O and prepare a firm seeding bed.</i> <i>Additional requirements:</i>		
Planting Method (Refer to MA Standard and Specification 612, 340 or 342) indicate amount)	Hand	Machine (circle and
<i>For container and bareroot stock, plant stock to a depth even with the root collar in holes deep and wide enough to fully extend the roots. Pack the soil firmly around each plant. Cuttings are inserted in moist soil with at least 2 to 3 buds showing above ground. Plants will be established prior to May 30 unless containerized seedlings are used or plants will be watered. Drill small grass and legume seed $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep uniformly over area.</i> <i>Additional requirements or special planting instructions:</i>		
Cultural Practices (Refer to MA Standard and Specification 643, 340, 342, and 612 for specific requirements) <i>Pest Management is required. Weed control, especially of non-native, invasive species, is necessary, either by prescribed burning, mechanical cutting, herbiciding or mulching for at least 2 years after planting or seeding.</i> <i>Vegetation Mat-Size _____ # _____ Tree Shelter-Size _____ # _____</i> <i>Mulch- coverage _____ # _____ Other _____</i> <i>Additional requirements or special management instructions:</i>		
Operation and Maintenance (Refer to MA Standard and Specification 643) <i>The treatment area must be inspected periodically and protected from damage so proper function is maintained. Replace dead or dying vegetation to provide adequate plant densities as described in the 612, 340 or 342 standard and continue control of competing vegetation to allow proper establishment for at least 2 years. Any use of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals shall not compromise the intended purpose of this practice.</i> <i>Additional requirements:</i>		

Installation shall be in accordance with the specified drawings, specifications, and special requirements. No changes are to be made in the drawings or specifications without prior approval. Questions regarding the planting or maintenance of the tree/shrub establishment should be directed to [_____], at _____.